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You can't kid a kiddier - Ellis Weiner (April Fools')

SHINING TIME STATION

"YOU CAN'T KID A KIDDER"

BY

ELLIS WEINER

FIRST DRAFT
JULY 31, 1992

SCENE 1

(FADE IN)

(MAINSET)

(MORNING. STACY IS OPENING FOR BUSINESS. A CALENDAR SITS ON DESK, SHOWING MARCH 30; SHE TEARS IT OFF, CRUMPLES AND DISCARDS IT, REVEALING MARCH 31. SHE BUSIES HERSELF WITH DESK WORK FOR A BEAT, THEN THE PHONE RINGS. SHE ANSWERS)

STACY:

Shining Time
Station... Good morning,
Mr. King... No, Schemer
isn't in yet... ~~the lease~~
for his arcade? I think
there's a copy in the
files... yes, and we'll
see you later... You're
welcome.

*you need to renew it
today?*

(SHE HANGS UP AND CROSSED TO BILLY'S OFFICE, ENTERS. A BEAT OF SILENCE. THEN DAN, KARA AND BECKY ENTER FROM PLATFORM IN MID-CONVERSATION)

DAN:

I'm telling you, we're in
big trouble tomorrow.
April Fool's day is
Schemer's favorite day.

KARA:

What will he do?

DAN:

Go totally crazy with
practical jokes.
Squirters and buzzers and
trick gum and whoopee
cushions --

BECKY:

Yeah, but are you sure
April Fool's Day is
tomorrow?

(DAN LEADS THEM OVER TO DESK AND
POINTS TO CALENDAR)

Oh, right.

KARA:

Maybe we should stay
away.

DAN:

Or...

(HE THINKS, FLIPPING CALENDAR
PAGES)

BECKY:

Or what?

DAN:

Suppose we tore this off.
Schemer would think today
is April Fool's Day.

BECKY:

He'd go around saying,
April Fool! April Fool!

KARA:

And everybody would look
at him and say, Huh?

(THEY LAUGH FOR A MOMENT -- THEN, A
THOUGHTFUL SILENCE)

BECKY:

Can we do that?

KARA:

I don't know...

(THEY FREEZE AS THEY HEAR, FROM
PLATFORM--)

Calendar needs to be

big

SCENE 1 (CONT'D)

SCHEMER:

(OS)

(SINGING, SWINGING)

"I...do...
Something to me.
Something that simply
misti-fiiiiiiies...me..."

(THE KIDS LOOK AT EACH OTHER. DAN
HOLDS OUT CALENDAR, BECKY TEARS OFF
SHEET AND HANDS IT TO KARA, WHO
SHOVES IT INTO HER POCKET. ALL
THEN RUN TO TICKET BOOTH, WHERE
THEY LOOK ELABORATELY INNOCENT.
SCHEMER ENTERS)

SCHEMER:

"Tell me...why should it
be...I have the power to
hyponotiiiiiiize me..."
Children. Dan and Becky
and Kara. How are we
today?

(THEY AD LIB MUMBLES, SHRUGS --
"OKAY," FINE," ETC. SCHEMER
STROLLS TOWARD STACY'S DESK,
UNDER--)

"Fine"? "Okay"? Not
good enough! Where's
your youthful zest? I
want to hear, "Schemer,
you biz-whiz, you, we
feel FANTAS--"

(HE STOPS, HIS ATTENTION RIVETED ON
THE CALENDAR. HE'S TERRIFIED)

Wait a minute. What's
that.

DAN:

What's what, Schemer?

KARA:

It's a calendar.

SCENE 1 (CONT'D)

SCHEMER:

Exactly.

(TO HIMSELF, TENSE)

It says April the first.

(HYSTERICAL)

APRIL FOOL'S DAY! TODAY!
NOW!

(CALM, CONTROLLED)

Okay. So I lost track of
time. I'm a happy-go-
lucky guy. These things
happen.

(HYSTERICAL)

Everybody'll be out to
get me! Everything they
say, everything they do
-- it'll all be an
attempt to fool Schemer!

(COLLECTS HIMSELF)

So be it. Let them. As
of this moment, I am
ready. It's fool or be
fooled, and I certainly
will.

(STACY ENTERS FROM BILLY'S OFFICE
CARRYING SCHEMER'S LEASE)

STACY:

Oh, Schemer. Just the
man I wanted to see --

SCHEMER:

No no no no NO, Miss
Jones. Don't even think
about it.

STACY:

Don't think about what?

SCENE 1 (CONT'D)

SCHEMER:

Is that how we're playing
it? Miss Innocence?

STACY:

I just want you to look
at this. It's your
lease--

SCHEMER:

Oh is it now? Come come,
Miss Jones. The old
flash-paper lease trick?
I touch it and it bursts
into flames?

]

?

*The old fly paper lease
trick? I touch it and
it sticks to my hands
like glue?*

STACY:

What are you talking
about?

SCHEMER:

Schemer Rule Number One,
Miss Jones: You can't
kid a kidder.

(STACY WATCHES, DUMBFOUNDED, AS
SCHEMER MOVES WARILY THROUGH
STATION: SNEAKS UP ON TICKET BOOTH
AND SUDDENLY LUNGES IN, LOOKING FOR
DANGER; GOES TO DESK, AND POUNCES
ON PHONE, CHECKING IT FOR HIDDEN
BUGS; SIDLES OVER TO BILLY'S OFFICE
AND PEEKS IN WARILY)

Yes, everything looks
completely normal... and
that's exactly what
worries me -- AH HA!

(HE SUDDENLY STARES UP AT THE
CEILING, HANDS OUT, POISED, READY
FOR ANYTHING. BEAT. NOTHING
HAPPENS)

STACY:

Have you been under
stress --

SCENE 1 (CONT'D)

SCHEMER:

What was that?! Somebody
just said "You're under
arrest!"

STACY:

Schemer, I don't know
what you're up to, but
I'd like you to look at
this --

SCHEMER:

I'm sure you would, Miss
Jones. But not just yet.

(HE SKULKS WARILY TOWARD PLATFORM)

STACY:

Then when?

(HE STOPS, TURNS TO HER, MAKES HIS
GRAND STATEMENT)

SCHEMER:

When I'm prepared. When
I've got my equipment and
my stuff. When I am
well-armed and
strategically ready to
face whatever this day
holds in store. Because
let me assure you, Miss
Jones: When I come back,
I shall return.

(Get me Arthur here)

(HE EXITS. STACY IS BAFFLED)

STACY:

He is certainly acting
strangely. Even for him.

(THE KIDS GIGGLE AMONG THEMSELVES)

(DISSOLVE TO:)

SCENE 2
(INT. ARCADE)

(LATER. SCHEMER IS BEDECKED WITH PRACTICAL JOKES: SQUIRTING FLOWER, JOY BUZZER, TRICK PEN IN HIS POCKET, WEIRD HAT, ETC. HE ROOTS AROUND IN A BIG VALISE AND PULLS OUT EACH ITEM AS HE TAKES INVENTORY)

SCHEMER:

Itch powder... snapping gum... whoopee cushion... black-eye telescope... dribble glass... -- and all of it state-of-the-art.

(HE TAKES OUT CHATTERING TEETH, SETS THEM ON COUNTER. TALKS TO THEM)

What are you grinning at? I know -- you admire me. Hey, why not. Like the man said, on April Fool's Day, you can fool all the people all of the time, all day, every day, for one day only. But you can't fool me. I'm ready.

(BILLY LEAVES HIS OFFICE AND CROSSES TO THE ARCADE)

BILLY:

Nice day, huh, Schemer?

SCHEMER:

Oh, perhaps...

(BILLY GOES TO JUKEBOX AS SCHEMER EYES HIM SUSPICIOUSLY. BILLY TAKES OUT NICKEL, IS ABOUT TO INSERT IT, WHEN SCHEMER STOPS HIM.)

Billy? Mind if I ask what you're doing?

] Well Will just see how nice it is now, wait we?

SCENE 2 (CONT'D)

BILLY:

I had a desire to hear
some music. So I'm
putting a nickel in the
juke box.

SCHEMER:

And it just happens to
be today, doesn't it?

BILLY:

Beg pardon?

SCHEMER:

Billy, let's put our
cards on the table, shall
we? I know what's going
on, and you know what's
going on. And now you
know that I know that you
know that I know what's
going on.

BILLY:

But what's going on?

SCHEMER:

As if you didn't know!
Billy, it should be
obvious by now that I
know the score. And the
score is, Schemer one,
Billy nothing. The
jukebox is closed.

BILLY:

(SHRUGS)

Suit yourself.

(BILLY STARTS TO WALK OFF. SCHEMER
HAS A GREAT IDEA, DASHES FORWARD TO
BLOCK HIM, AND OFFERS UP THE
SNAPPING GUM)

SCENE 2 (CONT'D)

SCHEMER:

But that doesn't mean we
can't still be friends.
have a stick of perfectly
ordinary gum.

BILLY:

Sure.

(BILLY TAKES ONE -- A REAL ONE --
UNWRAPS IT, PUTS IN MOUTH)

Spearmint. Thanks.

(HE WALKS OFF. SCHEMER IS PUZZLED.
LOOKS AT THE PACK. TAKES ONE
HIMSELF -- WHICH CAUSES THE METAL
BAND TO SNAP HIM ON THE FINGER. HE
WRITHES, TRIES TO STIFLE HIS MOANS,
AND FINALLY RUNS OUT THE PLATFORM
EXIT, SCREAMING IN PAIN)

(CUT TO:)

SCENE 3
(INT. JUKEBOX)

(THE PUPPETS ARE DISGRUNTLED)

DIDI:

Can you believe Schemer?
He thinks today's April
Fool's Day just because
the kids changed the
calendar.

TITO:

And because he's out to
trick everyone, he thinks
everyone is out to trick
him.

DIDI:

So we don't get to play
Billy's song.

REX:

Maybe one of us ought to
tell him he's making a
mistake, Tex.

Schemer

TEX:

Go right ahead, Rex.

(BEAT -- THEY ALL LOOK AT EACH
OTHER)

ALL:

Naaaahh!

(CUT TO:)

SCENE 4
(ARCADE)

(DAY. THE KIDS ARE LOOKING AT SCHEMER'S BAG OF TRICKS, DEBATING ON WHETHER TO OPEN IT)

DAN:

Come on. We don't have to touch anything. We'll just look.

BECKY:

It's not ours, Dan.

KARA:

But there's so much neat stuff in there.

(MR. C. APPEARS. THE CHATTERING TEETH, WHICH HE DOESN'T SEE, ARE RIGHT BEHIND HIM)

MR. C:

Ah, the irresistible appeal of neat stuff.

DAN:

Mr. Conductor, can't we just take a peak?

MR. C:

Maybe if he had left the bag open. But if the case is closed, the case is closed.

suitcase

(OFF DAN'S DISMAY)

On the other hand, if I know Schemer, sooner or later you'll get a chance to see all this neat stuff in action.

SCENE 4 (CONT'D)

(AS HE SAYS THIS, HE CASUALLY LEANS BACK WITH ONE ARM OUTSTRETCHED, EXPECTING TO PROP HIMSELF AGAINST THE WALL. BUT HIS HAND LANDS AGAINST THE TEETH. THEY START CHATTERING. THE VIBRATION SHAKES HIM OFF, AND THE TEETH START MOVING TOWARD HIM)

BECKY:

Look out! Here come the teeth!

(MR C. RUNS -- AND QUICKLY ARRIVES AT THE EDGE OF THE COUNTER. THERE'S NO WHERE ELSE TO GO. HE JUMPS -- AND LANDS ON A CHAIR, ON TOP OF A WHOOPEE CUSHION, WHICH MAKES THE INEVITABLE NOISES. THE KIDS RUSH OVER IN CONCERN. HE GETS UP AND COLLECTS HIMSELF)

KARA:

Are you all right?

MR. C:

That was close! I was almost chattered to death. But why is Schemer using all these tricks today? I thought tomorrow is April first.

DAN:

It is. But we fooled him. We tore off today's page on the calendar, so he thinks today is tomorrow.

SCENE 4 (CONT'D)

MR. C:

Did you tell Billy and
Stacy?

(THE KIDS ALL SHAKE THEIR HEADS
"NO." MR. C. BURSTS OUT LAUGHING)

So he thinks they're out
to trick him, and they
think he's even crazier
than usual!

(SIMMERS DOWN)

A good laugh -- you know,
isn't laughter strange?
It's so much fun, but
it's really not that much
different from coughing,
is it? Which is no fun
at all.

BECKY:

I hate coughing.

KARA:

Sneezing's kind of fun.

DAN:

Hiccups are okay, too.
As long as you don't have
to do it for the rest of
your life.

SCENE 4 (CONT'D)

MR. C:

The thing about laughing
is, you can make people
do it just by talking to
them. Of course, it's
important to know when,
where, and how. When it
comes to telling jokes,
some times are definitely
better than others.
Speaking of which --

(LOOKS AT WATCH)

-- if you want to see
something really funny,
take a look down the
Anything Tunnel.

(AS THEY TURN TO RUN)

Not yet!

(LOOKS AT WATCH)

Okay. Now.

(THEY RUN TO THE TUNNEL AS WE PAN
TO:)

SCENE 5

(ANYTHING TUNNEL -- PICTURE MACHINE
SONG - ? -)

(CUT TO)

??

SCENE 6
(MAINSET)

(A BIT LATER. SCHEMER ENTERS,
SHIFTY AND CAUTIOUS. SUDDENLY
OVER AT THE ARCADE, HE SEES--

GINNY, TRANSFERRING TOMATOES FROM
A LARGE BAG TO A SMALLER ONE.

HE APPROACHES HER)

SCHEMER:

Hello, Ginny. I don't
suppose you'd care to
tell me what you're
really doing.

GINNY:

(KEEPS WORKING)

Just what it looks like,
Schemer.

SCHEMER:

In other words, putting
together some kind of
bogus exploding vegetable
gag, eh? Not bad.

GINNY:

They're tomatoes. I'm
putting together a bag
for Stacy.

SCHEMER:

Real tomatoes? Puh-
leeze. Don't make me
laugh.

(HE TRIGGERS A LAUGHING-VOICE
DEVICE IN HIS POCKET, WHICH GOES
"HA HA HA" AS GINNY GETS INSULTED)

SCENE 6 (CONT'D)

GINNY:

Of course they're real,
Schemer. Don't you dare
accuse me of being as
sneaky as you are. And
tell your clothes to stop
laughing at me.

SCHEMER:

Ginny. Darling. This
fake tomato bit is the
oldest trick in the book.
Shall we get it over
with?

(TAKES A TOMATO)

One, two, three -- voila!

(HE SLAMS THE [REAL] TOMATO ON THE
TOP OF HIS HEAD -- IT BUST AND
DRIPS ALL OVER HIM)

GINNY:

You deliberately wasted
a good tomato! Get out
of here. Go pick on
somebody else's
groceries.

SCHEMER:

Me? What about you! You
smuggled a real tomato in
there on purpose!

slipped

(FAKE-GRACIOUS)

But I forgive you. Let's
shake and make up.

GINNY:

Well... okay.

(THEY SHAKE)

And get rid of that ring.
It's awful.

SCENE 6 (CONT'D)

(SHE TAKES THE BAGS AND CROSSES TO STACY AT THE MAIN DESK. SCHEMER FROWNS, LOOKS AT BUZZER ON HIS HAND. HE FIDDLES WITH IT)

SCHEMER:

It's not a ring. It's --

(HE HOLDS IT UP TO HIS EAR. IT GOES OFF WITH A LOUD BUZZ. HE RECOILS AND STAGGERS AROUND)

(AT MAIN DESK -- GINNY HANDS OVER THE SMALL BAG)

GINNY:

Here's ^{re} your tomatoes, Stacy. And speaking of tomatoes, watch out for Schemer today. He's absolutely bananas.

(NEARBY, THE KIDS GIGGLE AMONG THEMSELVES. STACY NOTICES. THINKS, THEN MOTIONS TO THEM TO ACCOMPANY HER. GINNY, ALERT TO SOMETHING JUICY, SCURRIES AFTER)

(AT ARCADE, SCHEMER IS LUSTILY PAINTING A STRIPE OF MYSTERIOUS STICKY GOO ACROSS THE ENTRANCE. STACY ARRIVES AND WATCHES, WITH KIDS AND GINNY IN BACKGROUND)

SCHEMER:

(SINGS TO HIMSELF; TO "APRIL IN PARIS)

"April the First in
Shining Time Station
Congratulations
To-hoo-hoo MEEEE--"

STACY:

Schemer --

(SCHEMER IS STARTLED; HE JUMPS, YELLS, ASSUMES A CRAZED SERIES OF PSEUDO-MARTIAL ARTS STANCES, UNDER--)

SCENE 6 (CONT'D)

SCHEMER:

I'm ready! Do your
worst!

STACY:

That doesn't look like
paint to me.

SCHEMER:

Oh, Miss Jones. You
almost startled me. And
no, it isn't paint. I'm
laying down a line of
super-sticky space-age
goo. So that people who
enter the Arcade will
find their well-shod
tootsies stuck smack to
the linoleum. Funny?
Just thinking of it makes
me laugh. Watch.

(HE STRIKES A POSE OF
CONCENTRATION, THEN TRIGGERS THE
LAUGH BOX)

STACY:

Schemer, you can't play
pranks like that on our
customers like this.

✓

SCENE 6 (CONT'D)

SCHEMER:

I am not "playing pranks."
I'm defending myself.
The world is crawling
with jokers and
tricksters out to get me,
Miss Jones. I intend to
get them first.

(FAKE-GRACIOUS)

But let's not talk about
me. Let's talk about
you. ~~Miss Jones...~~
~~Stacy...~~ you're a woman
of impeccable taste.
Might I maybe interest
you in some --

Lovely, Miss Jones

(PRODUCES BOTTLE FROM JACKET
POCKET)

*Perfume bottle
with large rubber squeeze
bulb.*

-- sophisticated,
fabulous perfume?

(HE UNCAPS BOTTLE, WAVES IT AROUND,
BECKONS TO STACY)

Come closer. Experience
the magic and the
mystery.

STACY:

No, thanks, Schemer.

SCHEMER:

Oh, don't thank me yet.
Let me bestow on you the
delightful and
unforgettable essence of
wonderful glorious --

(HE MANAGES TO SQUIRT IT ON
HIMSELF: A BLACK, SMELLY LIQUID)

SCENE 6 (CONT'D)

STACY:

Schemer, I don't know what this is all about, but I'm going to discuss it with Billy. And if we have to call your mother to straighten you out, we will.

(SHE STORMS OFF TO BILLY'S OFFICE, THE OTHERS BEHIND. [THE KIDS LAUGHING.] SCHEMER CALLS AFTER HER)

SCHEMER:

Go ahead! My mommy knows what day it is. Unlike some people.

(HE TRIGGERS THE LAUGH BOX AND LIP-SYNCHS THE LAUGH, AS WE --)

(CUT TO:)

SCENE 7
(WORKSHOP)

(A BIT LATER. BILLY LISTENS DEADPAN, SEATED AT DESK, AS STACY, GINNY AND THE KIDS GATHER ROUND AND STACY FINISHES HER REPORT)

STACY:

He's booby-trapping how own Arcade! Maybe he's sick with fever.

his

(THE KIDS LAUGH)

GINNY:

Sick my eye. I say he's just finally gone wacko.

(THE KIDS LAUGH HARDER. BILLY LOOKS QUIZZICALLY AT THEM, RISES, GOES TO DOOR, LOOKS OUT)

BILLY:

Seems to me he's expecting something to happen. Today's not his birthday, is it?

(THE KIDS REALLY CRACK UP AT THIS. THE ADULTS TURN TO THEM, SUSPICIOUS)

STACY:

Wait a minute. Do you three know anything about this?

(KIDS SHUFFLE, LOOK AT EACH OTHER, STALL)

BILLY:

Let's have it. We can't run the station with Schemer acting so strange.

DAN:

He thinks today is April Fool's Day.

SCENE 7 (CONT'D)

KARA:

So he's trying to trick
everyone else before they
trick him.

STACY:

But why would he think
that? April Fool's Day
isn't until tomorrow.

BECKY:

We tore today's date off
your calendar.

(THE ADULTS ALL LOOK AT EACH OTHER.
COMPREHENSION DAWNS)

GINNY:

Well shut my mouth and
paint me purple.

STACY:

That's not very nice,
kids.

DAN:

We never actually said
it was April first.

KARA:

If he had asked us, we
would have told the
truth.

BECKY:

Besides, nobody's played
tricks on him. He's
doing all this crazy
stuff himself.

BILLY:

And he's about to do it
again.

SCENE 8
(ARCADE)

(FELIX IS AT THE JUKEBOX,
DIGGING FOR A NICKEL. JUST AS HE'S
ABOUT TO INSERT IT, SCHEMER APPEARS
AND PLUCKS IN FROM HIS HAND)

SCHEMER:

Felix? Please.

FELIX:

Hey! What's the idea,
Schemer?

SCHEMER:

Money patrol. Weeding
out bogus, fake-o money
like this.

(TOSSES IT OVER HIS SHOULDER)

Face it, pal. You are
dealing with a master.

FELIX:

Are you feeling all
right?

*There's nothing wrong
with that nickel*

SCENE 8 (CONT'D)

SCHEMER:

Never better. What's my secret? Simple. I take the time to stop and smell the roses. Or the petunias, the begonias, whatever this is. Care to join me?

(HE GESTURES TOWARD SQUIRT-FLOWER ON HIS LAPEL, AIMS IT AT FELIX, AND FIRES -- RIGHT INTO SCHEMER'S EYE. HE STAGGERS, REELS AROUND.

I'm all right. Everybody relax!

(HE STUMBLES AROUND UNTIL HIS FEET LAND IN THE STRIPE OF GOO ACROSS THE ARCADE ENTRANCE. HE'S STUCK --STRUGGLES, BUT CAN'T MOVE.

They've got me! They've got me!

(STACY, BILLY, GINNY AND THE KIDS RUSH OUT OF BILLY'S OFFICE AND CLUSTER AROUND HIM AS DOES FELIX. SCHEMER STOPS, REGARDS THEM)

So, it's come to this. I might have known.

BILLY:

Known what, Schemer.

SCHEMER:

That all of you were working together. Secretly, fiendishly -- to trick me into stepping into my own goo. Well, it won't work.

(STRUGGLES, STAYS STUCK)

Okay. it will work. But that's it! From now on, I'm wise to all of you.

SCENE 8 (CONT'D)

STACY:

Look, this has all been a
big misunderstanding.
The calendar --

SCHEMER:

Calendars don't lie. Or
I suppose one of you is
going to say, "Schemer,
today isn't really April
Fool's Day."

GINNY:

Schemer, as a matter of
fact, today isn't really
April Fool's Day.

SCHEMER:

I rest my case!

BILLY:

The kid's tore off
today's date. April
first is tomorrow.

SCHEMER:

Of course you're going to
say that. It's all part
of the trick. Well guess
what I've got?

(PRODUCES BOTTLE FROM JACKET
POCKET)

Ta-daa! Wait'll you hear
what this is!

DAN:

What is it?

SCHEMER:

(SUDDENLY PARANOID)

Why should I tell you?

SCENE 8 (CONT'D)

BILLY:

Fine. Meanwhile --

(TO FELIX)

-- let's get him loose.

(THE TWO TAKE SCHEMER'S ARMS AND
TRY TO LIFT HIM OFF THE GOO.
SCHEMER RESISTS)

SCHEMER:

I'm warning you! I have a
sprinkle can and I'm not
afraid to use it!

(HE BRANDISHES THE BOTTLE AT THEM,
AND COCKS IT BACK TO SPRINKLE IT AT
THE OTHERS. BUT THE TOP FLIES OFF,
AND THE WHOLE CAN OF POWDER FLIES
BACK ONTO SCHEMER. HE DROPS THE
CAN IN PANIC)

Ahh! No! I'm a dead man!

KARA:

Why? What is that stuff?

STACY:

(PICKS UP CAN, READS)

Itching powder.

(SFX: TRAIN ARRIVES)

(SCHEMER STARTS A WILDLY GYRATING
ITCH-DANCE, IN PLACE AND STILL
STUCK TO THE FLOOR. HE SCRATCHES,
WRITHES AS THE OTHERS STARE)

STACY:

Is there anything we can
do?

SCHEMER:

Scratch here! And here!
And down there! Oh,
never mind!

I'm a goner! I'm history!

SCENE 8 (CONTD)

(STILL SCRATCHING, HE STARTS TO REMOVE PIECES OF CLOTHING, FLINGING THEM AWAY, PAUSING FOR A SECOND AS THOUGHT THAT DID THE TRICK, THEN LAUNCHING BACK INTO A FRENZY OF SCRATCHING. HE DROPS HIS TROUSERS, REVEALING HIS LONG JOHNS, AND SCRATCHES HIS LEGS)

(ANGLE ON PLATFORM ENTRANCE: J.B. KING ARRIVES, NO-NONSENSE AND DRESSED FOR BUSINESS. CARRIES A SATCHEL)

(STACY SEES HIM, RUSHES OVER TO INTERCEPT HIM)

STACY:

Mr. King, Schemer hasn't, uh, had a chance to look over his old lease yet.

KING:

Quite all right, Miss Jones. We'll go over it together.

STACY:

But he's...kind of stuck on a problem right now--

KING:

If he wants to stay on with his Arcade, he'll see me.

(KING SPIES SCHEMER, JOINS HIM AND THE OTHERS. STACY FOLLOWS)

Look here, Schemer --

SCHEMER:

Well, J.B. King. So you're in on this, too?

✓
red or polka dotted ?

large briefcase

immediately

SCENE 8 (CONT'D)

KING:

I'm not in on anything.

But I'm afraid you're in on something - Big Trouble
(DIGS IN SATCHEL)

It's about your lease.
It's expired. If you
want to keep running the
Arcade, you have to sign
a new one. Here.

(HE PRODUCES A THREE-FOOT LONG
DOCUMENT, THRUSTS IT AT SCHEMER)

Read it carefully and
sign on the dotted line.

(SCHEMER CANS THE LEASE QUICKLY,
CHUCKLING)

SCHEMER:

You people must think I
was born yesterday. Did
you actually believe I
would sign this phony-
baloney piece of
gobbledygook?

BILLY:

Schemer, you're making a
mistake.

SCHEMER:

Oh no! Shame on me! We
can't have that, can we?
I'd better sign right
away.

(TAKES PEN FROM POCKET)

How do you spell "Abraham
Lincoln"?

KING:

Is this some kind of
joke?

SCENE 8 (CONT'D)

SCHEMER:

No, but this is!

(HE LIFTS THE FILLER LEVER: INK SHOOT'S OUT ALL OVER KING. THE OTHERS GASP AND RECOIL AS KING SPUTTERS. SCHEMER TAKES OUT THE LAUGH BOX AND HOLDS IT OUT AS IT LAUGHS. KING FINALLY COLLECTS HIMSELF, GRABS IT, THROWS IT TO THE FLOOR)

KING:

Are you going to sign this, or do I get myself a new tenant?

SCHEMER:

Let me put it this way, Mr. J.B. King..

(SCHEMER HOLDS UP THE LEASE, THEN METHODICALLY TEARS IT INTO A HUNDRED PIECES AND TOSSES THEM INTO THE AIR. KING SNARLS, TURNS, AND STORMS OUT. STACY AND BILLY TRADE LOOKS AND FOLLOW HIM)

STACY:

Mr. King, wait! He's just kidding!

(THE KIDS LOOK AT EACH OTHER -- SCARED -- AND FOLLOW. GINNY SNORTS AND GOES, TOO. SCHEMER MANAGES TO TURN [IN PLACE] AND CALL AFTER THEM)

SCHEMER:

A-PRIL FOOL! HA HA! I guess you know what kind of man you're dealing with now.

(CUT TO:)

SCENE 9

(INT. JUKEBOX)

(THE PUPPETS ARE DISGUSTED)

TITO:

You know, just when I
start to feel sorry for
Schemer, he goes too far.

DIDI:

Yeah. They tried to tell
him the truth, but he
wouldn't listen.

TEX:

I think we ought to play
a song, Rex.

REX:

Just like that, Tex?
Without a nickel or
anything?

DIDI:

Great idea, boys!
That'll drive him crazy!

TITO:

Let's do (title). And
let's groove it good,
people!

(MUSIC: "THIS OLD MAN")

(CUT TO:)

SCENE 10

(ARCADE)

(SCHEMER HEARS THE SONG, IS
DISTRESSED)

SCHEMER:

Hey. That's impossible.
The jukebox is playing
without any money. Who
ever heard of free music?
I gotta turn that off...

(HE STRUGGLES TO REACH JUKE BOX,
BUT REMAINS STUCK)

(INTERCUT PUPPETS AND SCHEMER UNTIL
SONG ENDS)

(DISSOLVE TO:)

SCENE 11
(MAINSET)

(SOME TIME LATER. SCHEMER'S SHOES ARE EMPTY, STILL STUCK TO THE FLOOR. THE ARCADE IS A MESS. DAN, BECKY, AND KARA ARE MOPING AROUND THE MURAL SIGNAL HOUSE)

DAN:

I can't believe such a little trick could make such a big mess.

BECKY:

I feel like it's not really our fault, but...

KARA:

But it's our fault anyway. Me, too.

(THEY SIGH -- AS MR. C. APPEARS, DRESSED IN POLO ATTIRE)

MR. C:

Take it from me: polo is a good game, but riding on catback isn't as easy as it looks.

squirrel chipmunk back

DAN:

They keep getting distracted by acorns

(LACKLUSTER)

Hi, Mr. Conductor.

MR. C:

Gee, I must have the wrong location. Is this Shining Time Station, or the World Headquarters of the I.M.S.?

(OFF THEIR LOOK)

The International Mopey Society.

SCENE 11 (CONT'D)

KARA:

Our trick on Schemer sort
of got of hand.

MR. C:

Things with Schemer
usually do. What
happened?

BECKY:

He made Mr. King mad and
might not be able to keep
the Arcade.

MR. C:

Ouch! He still thought
it was April Fool's Day,
eh?

(THEY NOD)

Well, Mr. King is an
intelligent man. He
knows that people
sometimes make mistakes
-- even railroad people.
Remember that mixup with
Gordon and Edward?

ALL KIDS:

No.

MR. C:

Well, you will once I
tell you about it...

(DISSOLVE TO:)

SCENE 12

(TTE: "WRONG ROAD)

(DISSOLVE TO:)

SCENE 13
(MAINSET)

BECKY:

That wasn't Gordon's
fault. His conductor
made the mistake.

MR. C:

Right. But Gordon made
things worse with his
attitude.

SCHEMER:

(OS)

Moving men? Looking
for the Arcade? Oh, ha
ha. Face it -- you
can't fool me.

MR. C:

Speaking of attitude,
guess who. Excuse me
while I excuse myself.

(MR. C DISAPPEARS)

(ANGLE ON PLATFORM -- SCHEMER
ENTERS, DRESSED IN A BARREL [HIS
CHANGE-MAKER SECURED TO THE FRONT],
AND TIE. HE'S BAREFOOT. HE ENTERS
AND GOES TO KIDS)

SCHEMER:

So, my young friends.
Any question about who's
kidding whom around Shining
Time Station?

(KIDS LOOK AT EACH OTHER, AND REACH
A DECISION)

KARA:

Schemer, we have
something to tell you.

(ANGLE ON PLATFORM -- TWO MOVING
MEN [IN UNIFORM] ENTER AND GO TO
SCHEMER. ONE WHEELS A DOLLY)

SCENE 13 (CONT'D)

MOVING MAN A:

'Scuse us. You Schemer?
This the Arcade?

SCHEMER:

Yes and yes. What can I
do for you gentleman?

MAN A:

Nothing. *Just stay out of the way*
Thanks.

(THE MEN CROSS TO THE ARCADE AND
START TO LOAD A MACHINE ONTO THE
DOLLY)

SCHEMER:

See that, kids? They've
come here specifically to
meet me and play in the
Arcade. THAT's fame.
Now, what did you want to
tell me?

(THE KIDS ARE WATCHING THE MEN LOAD
MACHINE)

DAN:

Uh... well...

(SCHEMER FOLLOWS THEIR GAZE AND
SEES. DISTRAUGHT, HE GOES OVER)

SCHEMER:

Hey, what gives? Put
that back.

MAN A:

Sorry, bub. We got
orders to empty out this
whole area.

SCHEMER:

Whose orders?

(MAN A PULLS YELLOW ORDER SHEET
FROM POCKET, SHOWS SCHEMER)

SCENE 13 (CONT'D)

MAN A:

Mr. J.B. King. You don't
have a lease, he's taking
back the Arcade.

(SCHEMER LOOKS ANXIOUS FOR A BEAT,
THEN CHUCKLES)

SCHEMER:

Oh. I get it. Sure,
fellas. Go ahead.

(THE MEN RESUME MOVING THE
EQUIPMENT. THEY LOAD A MACHINE
ONTO THE DOLLY, WHEEL IT PAST
SCHEMER, LIFT IT UP THE STEPS)

DAN:

Schemer --

SCHEMER:

(TO MEN)

Tell J.B. King the joke's
on him.

BECKY:

We tricked you.

SCHEMER:

(TO MEN)

And I'll tell you why.

KARA:

You think it's April
Fool's Day, but it's not.

(THE MEN WHEEL THE MACHINE OUT
TOWARD PLATFORM)

SCENE 13 (CONT'D)

SCHEMER:

(TOWARD MEN; SHOUTING)

Because they tricked me.
I think it's April Fool's
Day, but it's not.

(BEAT; TO KIDS)

You did? I do? It
isn't?

(BEAT; DISMISSIVE)

Get out. You did not.
It is so.

(THE MEN RETURN, GO TO THE ARCADE,
AND START LOADING NEXT MACHINE,
UNDER --)

BECKY:

We tore today's date off
of Stacy's calendar.
April First is really
tomorrow.

SCHEMER:

(FAKE LAUGHS)

Boy, you almost had me
there. That's an
excellent April Fool's
Joke for three such young
children as yourselves.

DAN:

Look.

(HE MARCHES TO STACY'S DESK, GETS
CALENDAR, BRINGS IT BACK. SHOWS
SCHEMER)

What does it say?
"Wednesday, April 1."
Yesterday was Monday,
right? So what's today?

SCENE 13 (CONT'D)

SCHEMER:

(AS THOUGH EXPLAINING THE OBVIOUS)

Today? Dan, my lad. If
yesterday was Monday, then
today is W--

(CU -- SCHEMER STOPS COLD. THINKS.
THEN THE AWFUL TRUTH STARTS TO
DAWN. AFTER A FEW BEATS, HE
SUDDENLY DASHES MADLY TO THE --)

(ARCADE, AND FLINGS HIMSELF ONTO
THE MACHINE THE MEN HAVE LOADED
ONTO THE DOLLY. THEY START TO
WHEEL IT -- AND HIM -- OUT)

Stop! Please! PLEASE!
I've been duped!

MAN A:

Sorry, pal. We got
orders.

SCHEMER:

But today isn't tomorrow!
TOMORROW is tomorrow!

(AS THEY WHEEL HIM UP THE STEPS
TOWARD PLATFORM, STACY AND BILLY
APPEAR FROM OTHER ENTRANCE.
SCHEMER ADDRESSES THEM)

Call J. B. King! Tell
him I made a mistake!
Tell him I didn't know
today was today!

(SCHEMER AD LIBS HYSTERIA AS THEY
WHEEL HIM OUT TO PLATFORM)

(THE KIDS RUN UP TO STACY AND
BILLY)

KARA:

Stacy, we're really
sorry.

SCENE 13 (CONT'D)

DAN:

We let things go too far.

BECKY:

Will Schemer really lose
the arcade?

STACY:

I don't think so. We'll
explain to Mr. King what
happened. Just so long
as it doesn't happen
again, right?

(THE KIDS NOD, AS --)

(MR. C. APPEARS IN JESTER'S MOTLEY)

BILLY:

What do you think, Mr.
Conductor? Should we go
to bat for Schemer?

MR. C:

I think so. This wasn't
entirely his fault. But
better do it soon. So he
has time to get ready.
Like me.

DAN:

Ready for what?

(STACY SUDDENLY BURSTS OUT LAUGHING
AND CAN'T STOP)

STACY:

For tomorrow! Which
really is April Fool's
Day. Schemer will have
to go through this all
over again!

SCENE 13 (CONT'D)

(EVERYONE STARTS LAUGHING AS THE
MOVING MEN ENTER FROM PLATFORM,
SCHEMER DOGGING THEIR EVERY STEP.
HE AGAIN TRIES TO PREVENT THEIR
MOVING A MACHINE, AND IS DRAGGED
OUT PAST THE OTHERS, WHO ARE STILL
LAUGHING AS WE:)

(FADE OUT)